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REPORT ON THE HUMANITARIAN SITUATION IN SOUTH VIETNAM AND CAMBODIA

for

Sir Robert Jackson, UNCoordinator

for Humanitarian Programs in Indochina

April 29, 1975

N.B. This report was prepared over a several day period immediately prior to the collapse of the Government of South Vietnam and the passing of power to the Provisional Revolutionar Government. This accounts for the various statements in the report referring to territories and population still under GVN control.

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REPORT ON THE HUMANITARIAN SITUATION IN S. VIETNAM AND CAMBODIA

I. Purpose

To present to Sir Robert Jackson information available to A.I.D. on relevant aspects of the Humanitarian situation within Indochina.

In view of the extensive experience of A.I.D. in South Vietnam and in Cambodia and in consideration of the proposed expanded role of the United Nations in the humanitarian area in Indochina, we wish to share with Sir Robert and his staff whatever information we might have of possible interest and value.

II. Country Overviews

A. Vietnam

1. Situation Prior to Offensive

a. Refugees

In late 1974 there were as few as 42,000 refugees still in camps, 26,000 of whom were Cambodians. Military actions since mid-1974 had generated about 400,000 new refugees who required care of one type or another by the Ministry of Social Welfare (MSW) but were not put in camps. By the time of the current offensive, 168,000 had already returned to their original or nearby villages, while the remaining 232,000 were still receiving various forms of help, e.g. rice rations, food supplements, piaster support, etc. When the offensive began in early March only 16,000 Vietnamese refugees were still residing in camps.

Prior to March, the major thrust in the humanitarian area had shifted from solving the immediate food and shelter problems to the development of viable, resettlement sites throughout the country that would offer a long term solution for those who had become permanently displaced as a consequence of the many years of conflict. To this end, 150 resettlement sites were surveyed in late 1974 and early 1975 and the following conditions were found to exist:

Condition of Existing Resettlement Sites

Region	Population	Viable	Potentially Viable	Non-Viable	Total
1	166,300	7	40	21	68
2	53,400	13	35	1	49
3	95,500	14	16	1	31
4	27,011	0	2	0	2
Totals	342,211	34	93	23	150

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Viable Sites - were identified as those already capable of providing adequate economic, social and physical services and infrastructure to support the intended population, i.e., arable land, schools, hospitals, roads, water, etc.

Potentially Viable Sites - were those that could be brought into the viable category through such measures as adding to existing services or infrastructure or reducing population.

Non-Viable Sites - are those that were assessed as holding insufficient potential to warrant further development.

This program ceased at the time of the present crisis inasmuch as the bulk of these sites were no longer accessible to the Government of South Vietnam (GVN). However, the detailed planning work of the Task Force should still be available in MSW/Saigon.

b. Child Welfare & Orphans

As of the latest census conducted by the Government of Vietnam (GVN), of the estimated total population of over 18 million, 9 million, or approximately 50%, were under 15 years of age. This reflected a significant change since 1967, when approximately 45% of the total population of 17 million was under 15 years of age.

No data have been systematically collected on the number of full or part orphans in Vietnam. The following figures represent the best available estimates as of February 28, 1975:

ORPHANS (estimated)	
Total full or half orphans	1,200,000
Children of fallen servicemen receiving benefits from the Ministry of War Veterans	805,000
Vietnamese children in registered orphanages	17,055
Mixed children in registered orphanages*	945
Children in non-registered orphanages or "homeless"	5,000
Other children living with mothers or relatives	372,000

*There are an estimated 10,000-15,000 children with foreign fathers (mixed blood children). With the exception of 945 in orphanages, (312 of whom are black-Vietnamese), all are living with their mothers or relatives.

While a comprehensive survey has not been undertaken, an inventory of orphans in

institutions in South Vietnam was prepared in December, 1973. At that time the number of registered orphans* in orphanages, as well as the number of institutions in which they lived, was as follows:

Type	Regions 1		2		3		4		Saigon		Total	
	Children	Inst's.	Children	Inst.								
Catholic	2,281	12	2,241	18	3,853	24	1,609	17	553	5	10,537	76
Buddhist	852	5	517	5	550	6	115	1	381	1	2,415	18
Protestant	605	7	425	3	1,595	8	168	4	846	3	3,639	25
Totals	3,738	24	3,183	26	6,048	38	1,888	22	1780	9	16,637	119

Adoptions in 1973-75 and child care services permitting some of these children to return to their homes resulted in some reduction of these figures by March 1975.

Prior to the current offensive, there were fifty foreign voluntary agencies - thirty five of which were American - with programs in South Vietnam. Of the American agencies seven had received grants under the overall Ministry of Social Welfare/USAID/Voluntary Agency Child Care program. Two others received grants for health and rehabilitation programs.

During the past several years, AID has become very active in child welfare activities, with particular reference to orphans and other children seriously affected by the war and its aftermath.

In the overall area of services for disadvantaged children in Vietnam, the U.S. Government's support to the GVN has been substantial. In fiscal year 1973, our assistance amounted to about $31 million. This included assistance to refugee children--$15.5 million; food supplements for all needy children utilizing food under the Food for Peace program--$9.7 million; child health services--$4.85 million; and special programs for disadvantaged children--$1.2 million.

Support for disadvantaged children's programs was expanded in fiscal year 1974 and totalled over $40 million. A particularly important part of this overall child welfare assistance was the newly developed comprehensive $7.5 million program designed to meet many of the special child care needs in Vietnam. (Congress earmarked $5 million by this purpose.) The main objectives of the expanded program were to provide immediate benefits to disadvantaged children while simultaneously developing alternatives to child abandonment through the expansion of home nurseries, day care center programs, and foster home care. This program was designed to achieve major improvements in child nutrition and in the management

* In Vietnam an orphan is defined as a child with one or no surviving parent(s). These data include only registered orphans. The number of unregistered is unknown but not large.

and physical conditions of orphanages and child care centers as well as improved health services for malnourished, diseased or handicapped children. Approximately one tenth of the funds were used to help voluntary agencies licensed to carry on overseas adoption.

Over $5 million of the $7.5 million obligated in FY 74 was administered under a series of agreements designating voluntary agencies as project coordinators of various aspects of the overall program. These include Catholic Relief Services ($2,375,000), CARE(1,180,000), Holt International Children's Services ($725,000), World Vision Relief Organization ($400,000), International Rescue Committee($234,187), Friends for All Children ($100,000), Traveler's Aid-International Social Service of America ($224,000), Interagency Vietnamese Adoption Committee ($120,000), and World Relief Commission ($28,468). The Ministry of Social Welfare was provided $1,566,000 for assistance to orphanages, day care centers, institutions for handicapped children and for training programs, and the Ministry of Health received $324,000 to construct a training center for child health workers.

Congress authorized $10 million for the Vietnam child care program in fiscal year 1975 and AID has developed a program for the $10 million. While disrupted by the current crisis, the program was designed to continue and expand the activities initiated in fiscal year 1974 and to begin assistance for youth institutions and facilities. Also, more emphasis was to be placed on child health, expanding the national immunization program for children to include vaccinations for measles and providing vitamins and special antibiotics for pediatric/nutrition centers.

The intercountry adoption program continued to accelerate with three additional agencies approved to process adoptions, bringing the total to seven. While less than 200 intercountry adoptions were completed in 1970 and 1971 combined, 485 were completed in 1972, 682 in 1973 and 1,062 during 1974.

As of the evening of April 27th there were still 26 American and 11 Third Country national personnel remaining in Vietnam with American sponsored agencies. It is believed that with few exceptions these personnel were evacuated by April 29th. However, some of the Vietnamese staff of these agencies may continue to help in the distribution of supplies, etc.

2. Events Beginning Mid-March, 1975

The current Communist offensive, which began in earnest in mid-March, rolled at breathtaking speed and has already absorbed over three fourths of the land area of South Vietnam and more than six million of its population. Today, some sixteen Viet-Cong and North Vietnam Divisions are poised within several miles of Saigon and either a political or military solution appears close at hand. The human suffering and disruption brought about by these sudden and drastic military developments are all too familiar. More than a million refugees left their land, their villages and towns - many their families and belongings,

seeking what appeared to be safer haven oftentimes only to find that they had to move on again and again.

The first response of the U.S. Government was to assist affected people from the northern and central provinces who sought refuge in territories still controlled by the GVN. We dispatched ships to augment the 40-odd GVN craft available for this purpose along with vessels from other nations. Events moved too rapidly and evacuation efforts on the East Coast were only partially successful - approximately 150,000 people were relocated to territories still controlled by the GVN during these initial efforts. Others, roughly estimated at 850,000, moved and are still moving by their own and GVN efforts to various sites in the Saigon and delta area, bringing the total number of refugees generated by the current offensive to at least one million.

3. Situation as of April 30, 1975

a. Refugees

1. Numbers and Locations

As of April 29, 1975, the last day for which we have data, the number of newly registered refugees was reported as 694,346, distributed as follows:

REFUGEE SITUATION REPORT

Refugees in specific locations (registered with Ministry of Social Welfare) as of 27 April 1975.

A. MR-III (Located in vicinity surrounding Saigon and port city of Vung Tau).

	TOTAL 4/27/75
Binh Tuy	52,560
Binh Duong	33,790
Bien Hoa	147,232
Vung Tau	82,185
Phuoc Tuy	69,162
Tay Ninh	63,550
Hau Nghia	9,463
Long An	2,825
Gia Dinh	58,189
SUB-TOTAL MR-III	518,956

B. MR-IV (Delta Areas)

An Giang	4,631
Vinh Binh	61,569
Vinh Long	13,511
Phu Quoc	28,135
Zn Xuyen	2,411

Chau Doc	19,165
Kien Giang	13,441
Kien Phong	9,425
Kien Tuong	6,649
Phong Dinh	7,843
Kien Hao	484
Go Cong	213
Ba Xuyen	1,490
Sa Dec	6,423
	175,390
GRAND TOTAL	694,346

2. Food, Shelter, Medicines and Services

a. General

With respect to living conditions in the specific locations, our information is far from complete. However, we do have encouraging information concerning conditions on Phu Quoc island, one of the larger refugee locations.

There are now over 28,000 refugees on Phu Quoc. As of April 21, 1975, the previously uncoordinated efforts of the VN Navy, the ARVN, military police, the Ministry of Health (MOH), and the Volag health assistance programs were put under the direction of Dr. Van Van Cua, Director of Health and Medical Care Services for Phu Quoc, which appears to have been a good move.

A temporary 200 bed hospital for which the equipment was provided by USAID has been set up and is functioning. The MOH has established six out-patient clinics capable of treating 2400 patients per day and has asked CARE to supervise the immediate establishment of feeding stations and milk distribution centers. Two pumps have been installed to provide potable water and ten additional pumps are being installed.

While we have little information concerning conditions among the large number of refugees in the Saigon area and adjacent provinces, the International Red Cross has developed a three-month plan for continuing assistance to about 500,000 displaced persons in 31 resettlement sites around Saigon as well as Phu Quoc island. It is our understanding that the UNHCR, UNICEF and the Red Cross have agreed to pool their supplies and resources and deliver relief through the South Vietnam Red Cross. Until their recent evacuation the American voluntary agencies were actively assisting these refugees. Vietnamese Ministry of Social Welfare teams are working at all official sites and are providing temporary housing and providing food and health services.

The rapidly changing situation within the refugee camps together with cable traffic reflecting evacuation of various health and social welfare officials outside of South Vietnam makes it very difficult to provide an overall assessment of the current status.

Dr. Larry Smookler, who returned one week ago from Saigon, reported that MOH health teams were active in the areas which he visited in Saigon and Vung Tau. In addition to the MOH teams there were two teams from the Gralle Hospital and a team from West Germany.

b. Food

To date the U.S. has provided various amounts of rice, wheat protein foods and related nutrients, under the PL 480 program.

Just prior to the fall of Vietnam, we estimate the GVN had a stock of approximately 130,000 metric tons (MT). It should also be noted that there was an estimated 60-80,000 MT left in the northern provinces which were left behind when the government gave up those locations. In addition, Vietnam had only recently completed a record rice harvest most of which was still located in Delta areas. Other U.S. commodities provided this year included wheat and blended fortified foods used in the humanitarian assistance program. The U.S. has additional PL 480 commodities (rice and blended foods) at various nearby locations in Southeast Asia which can be utilized on short notice for emergency humanitarian needs.

Vietnam was well on its way to becoming a rice exporting nation. And even despite the tremendous social dislocations of recent weeks we have not been advised of any food shortages within the GVN controlled area.

c. Medical Supplies and Shelter

The following quantities of vaccines have already been delivered to various refugee sites:

Item	Quantity	Delivery Date
Typhoid	335,000 doses	14, 17th April 75
Cholera	100,000 "	5 April 75
Measles	40,000 "	6 April 75
Syringes/Needles	500,000 units	10 April 75

In addition, there is approximately $2.3 million worth of medicines either en route or pending shipment at various medical supply depots, $1 million of which is clearly identified for AID public health purposes. The balance is under procurement for the U.S. Defense Attache Office and would most likely have been destined for military medical purposes. The AID items consist of antibiotics, general hospital drugs and surgical supplies. None of these medicines have yet arrived.

1970 rolls of 100 x 20ft. plastic sheeting, which is utilized for temporary shelter, arrived in Saigon recently. Another 1800 rolls is on order but again, may prove to be impossible to ship, at least for the time being.

d. Voluntary Contributions

In addition to the above items, considerable quantities of food, medicines and other humanitarian supplies have been collected throughout the United States in support of the emergency but are in hold status in various domestic points awaiting shipping orders.

3. In-Country Logistics

In general, South Vietnam has an adequate logistical network and resource base. Through the years, with substantial U.S. technical and financial assistance, in-country capabilities for the receipt, storage, movement, distribution, and accounting of commodities have been developed.

In-country road, water and air transportation routes, carriers and services are fully operational; only the railroad system is out of operation due to war damage. At our last reading, Air Vietnam operated 2 727's and a fleet of DC-3's serving the major regional cities out of Saigon. The Vietnamese air force also controlled appreciable fixed wing and helicopter assets, the exact status of which today is not clear.

There are numerous provincial air fields throughout the country capable of meeting all known passenger and air cargo requirements. There are also ample deep draft ports, cargo handling facilities and an inter-water way network to meet normal requirements. An extensive all weather primary and secondary road net spanning the country latitudinally and longitudinally is also in place although maintenance and repair will pose a serious financial drain. While no count is available, it is our view that the country is also well endowed in road hauling assets with ample civilian and military trucks of varying sizes and a fully adequate maintenance and repair system. There would appear to be sufficient short and long haul capacity to meet known requirements.

With respect to warehousing, the GVN has developed an extensive complex in Tu Duc of over twelve buildings, each 140x80 feet, which, along with existing commercial warehousing capacity, provides sufficient space to meet virtually any contingency. Similar but smaller warehousing facilities are available in each of the remaining deep water ports, e.e. Danang, Qui Nhon, Nha Trang, Cam Ranh and Vung Tau. Also, the inland ports in the delta have adequate warehouse space and pier facilities. The warehousing system is under the direction of the Central Logistics Agency, a government entity, which has been managing the overall national logistical system moderately well for a number of years.

Large numbers of managerial, technical and skilled logistical personnel have been developed to manage the abundant assets described above - a far larger number than would be available in most other less developed countries. The obvious problems facing existing authorities and any international agencies that may become involved in the humanitarian area will be to marshal and mobilize these managerial and operational talents which have doubtless been distressed and dislocated during the present crisis.

4. Relief Assistance in Communist-held Areas

Our knowledge of humanitarian relief activities in former GVN-controlled areas is very limited. Reportedly, the PRG estimated in mid-April that six million people, including one million displaced persons, are in need of help. We understand that both the PRG and Hanoi are permitting the delivery of relief supplies. As you know, UNHCR/UNICEF air-charters of various registries are flying to Hanoi and deliveries are being made by sea to Haiphong.

5. Special Problems

While there are significant humanitarian supplies available in Vietnam, we can only conjecture that authorities in power must in the near future face an extremely difficult organizational program in virtually all aspects of caring for the millions of displaced and distressed peoples. It is hard to imagine how or when conditions will settle down to a point permitting a more rational treatment of the humanitarian problem. One particular issue which will doubtless occupy officials for years will be the problem of tracing family members who have become separated by the drastic upheavals of the past six weeks. Another will be how to cope with the longer term problem of establishing the millions of displaced people in viable occupations or agricultural sites - an issue tha-tthe GVN was making good progress toward solving when the current crisis developed.

An additional special problem will be the care of refugees now located on Phu Quoc and other smaller islands. The island's resources of food, water and health services are not adequate to support the huge influx of refugees which has occurred without a continuous delivery of relief supplies and a major construction and preparation effort to shelter and provide basic amenities to the population.

b. Child Welfare and Orphans

Much publicity has attended the recent orphan adoption movement characterized as "Operation Babylift." As of today, a total of 2,693 orphans from Vietnam and Cambodia have arrived in the U.S. and third countries or are in transit. This figure excludes 199 Montagnard children who left for Denmark on April 29, 1975. While this number accounts for a mere fraction of the one million full or partial orphans described above, or for that matter, only 15% of the orphans living in orphanages, we believe it does represent the bulk of bona fide adoptable orphans in South Vietnam. Most orphans live with a parent or relatives in a family setting. Those in orphanages often have a parent or other legal guardian who will not release them for adoption or the orphanage in which they reside will not permit adoption.

As to the children remaining in orphanages, we can only share the concern of all responsible national and international bodies that they will receive adequate humanitarian treatment. As mentioned above, a major problem, at least for the time being, will be the lack of trained, experienced expatriate personnel who until the current crisis, played such a key role in child welfare activities. A considerable vacuum doubtless is rapidly developing which it is hoped the UNICEF, ICRC and perhaps voluntary agencies can rapidly fill.

B. Cambodia

We have had no reports on the food situation in Cambodia since the American evacuation on April 12, 1975, but at that time there was less than one week's supply of rice in Phnom Penh. The Phnom Penh daily requirement of 700 MT of rice was being substantially met through the American-sponsored DC-8 airlift until April 12. To the best of our knowledge, except for a few air drops, there have been no additional rice deliveries since that time.

Stranded en route to Phnom Penh at the time of the fall were substantial amounts of rice, NFDM, and blended fortified foods which are temporarily being stored in neighboring areas, some of which is in Saigon.

ICRC has asked whether we could make some of the Saigon rice available and we have been responsive although we have not yet made a definite commitment. Should the new Khmer Government request it, and should the UNHCR, ICRC, or other international agencies pass this request on to the USG, we envisage that the following logistics pattern to resume the inputs of rice into Phnom Penh could develop:

Phase 1 - Khmer authorities could move rice now stored in Kompongsom to Phnom Penh by truck. Simultaneously, if necessary, international organizations could be given title to 15,000 MT of rice in Saigon, with International agencies to be responsible for arranging air shipment to Phnom Penh.

Phase 2 - More substantial quantities of rice could be made available, either coming up the Mekong from Saigon, moving from Singapore to Kimponsom warehouses, or both.

Phase 3 - After 45 to 60 days, it would be reasonable to assume that Cambodia could obtain rice from the Peoples' Republic of China, either directly or through PRC donations to international agencies.

Phase 4 - By this time, during the wet season, farmers presumably would have planted rice so that there would be an ample harvest in November and December. This would terminate the need for external rice assistance perhaps as soon as January, 1976.

Extensive resources are available within Cambodia and nearby countries to deal with its food and nutrition problem. Cambodia possesses adequate warehousing and trucks. The deep water port at Kompongsom is still believed to be functioning. The Khmer authorities should be able within a relatively short time to repair the U.S. built highway linking Kompongsom to Phnom Penh so that rice can move in through Kompongsom. Also, the United States is still partially funding the expenses in Bangkok of about 20 experienced, professional refugee and medical workers who formerly served in Cambodia with CARE World Vision and CRS. These people possibly could be made available to UNHCR or other international agencies either as individuals or collectively. In addition, there are 15 ICRC staff and several UNICEF personnel remaining in the Phnom Hotel. We have no information as to their safety or condition.

Outlook:

We believe Cambodia will in all likelihood face famine over the next 90 days unless its Government requests external assistance. However, we have not, as yet, heard of any request for external assistance from the authorities in Phnom Penh. The U.S. would naturally welcome resumption of UN assistance in Cambodia as it does in Vietnam.

C. Status of Third Country and ICRC Relief Assistance to Vietnam

1. Third Country Assistance

The following table indicates the current status of third country bilateral humanitarian assistance:

THIRD COUNTRY BILATERAL INDOCHINA HUMANITARIAN RELIEF ASSISTANCE

DONOR	TYPE
West Germany	Two merchant vessels for refugee evacuation; 20 tons emergency supplies.
Great Britain	One frigate for sea lift, $10 million pounds in other relief aid.
France	Five-man medical team to reopen Grall Hospital.
Canada	450,000 cases canned fish.
Australia	212 orphan airlift, 7 C-130's general relief supplies.
Taiwan	4 LST's; 5 C-119 aircraft.
Korea	One LST for refugees; 3 LST's with supplies, medical personnel.
Philippines	One LST for refugees.
Holland	$32,000 equivalent through Dutch Red Cross.
Denmark	$2.2 million through Danish Red Cross and Danish Church Relief.
Norway	$50 million kroner through regular aid budget and Norway Volags.
European Community	1,000 tons of cereal, 100 tons of milk powder.

2. International Red Cross Indochina Relief Assistance

In addition, the International Red Cross (ICRC) is actively in the humanitarian effort.

As a result of appeals launched by the International Red Cross on 25 March and 3 April, asking for contributions totaling 35 million dollars (about 88 million Swiss francs), some 36 million francs has already been pledged by the National Societies and Governments of 25 countries. Approximately 10 million francs has been received with commitments already in excess of 15 million (see below). Donations in kind, announced or already sent by various national Red Cross Societies, amount in value to more than Sw. Fr. 2 million.

Approximate Value of assistance delivered or underway since March 25:

Cambodia	1,700,000	Sw. Fr.
PRG	6,000,000	Sw. Fr.
S. Vietnam	7,527,000	Sw. Fr.
Common facilities (boat/aircraft)	1,000,000	Sw. Fr.
	15,527,000	

Republic of Viet-Nam (Saigon)

An ICRC survey team has developed a three-month plan for continuing assistance to about 500,000 displaced persons in 31 resettlement sites around Saigon and Phu Quoc Island. This plan consists of a one-time distribution to 100,000 families each of basic shelter and blankets and a monthly distribution of 60 kilograms of rice in addition to other food including milk, fish and/or meat. As you know, both UNHCR and UNICEF have agreed that this plan, which is now in effect at an estimated cost of 30 million Sw. Fr., corresponds as closely as possible to presently known needs. The three organizations have agreed to pool their supplies and resources and deliver relief through the RVN Red Cross. Of course the PRG Red Cross will become involved upon any Communist takeover.

PRG

On April 23 the first Red Cross charter flight with relief supplies earmarked for PRG areas arrived in Hanoi from Vientiane with foodstuffs, medicine and tents. ICRC has already committed 6 million Sw. Fr. to this operation which will consist of regular shuttle flights of supplies.

Two delegates of the International Red Cross, including the head of the Relief Division of the ICRC, have been in Hanoi since 19 April to work out with the North Vietnamese and PRG authorities the most practical means for the delivery of relief. They are also instructed to draw up a precise and detailed list of the needs of the people being assisted by the PRG Red Cross.

Cambodia

The ICRC has established a "neutral zone" in Royal Phnom Hotel, and on April 17, 2,000 people sought refuge there. Plans for the Cambodian program cannot be finalized until regular contact is established with the ICRC delegation, but substantial needs are anticipated. To facilitate movement of relief supplies throughout the area, the ICRC has chartered six aircraft in Vientiane and a freighter to move supplies by sea.

* * * *

D. Conclusion

Over the past ten years, AID has played a major role in providing humanitarian assistance to dislocated people in South Vietnam and Cambodia. In addition to meeting a major share of both local currency and dollar costs, a substantial number of social welfare technicians and advisors were working in Vietnam and Cambodia both as USAID staff or as personnel representing cooperating voluntary agencies. Advice or assistance from these officials, either individually or through their parent organizations, might prove to be of future value to the VN or ICRC relief and rehabilitation efforts and, in all likelihood, could be arranged if requested.